

# Safetygram

NCI Frederick

ISM174

Laboratory Personnel

February 2012

## Medical Waste Disposal

At NCI Frederick, medical waste is defined as any material, which may be contaminated with potentially infectious material. It also includes waste that may be perceived as medical waste.

Examples include gloves, Tyvek suits, culture tubes, beakers, flasks, petri dishes, and pipettes. Materials containing blood, serum or other body fluids must be appropriately treated by autoclaving or chemical disinfectants before being taken out of the building for pickup and disposal. All medical waste should be collected in special boxes, bags or other containers that clearly identify the waste as medical and a potential biohazard. Several different containers, such as sharps containers and medical waste boxes, are available at the warehouse.

Medical waste on post is collected for final disposal to the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Detrick. In almost all cases, the waste is burned at the medical waste incinerators located on Fort Detrick. Offsite facilities, such as LMT, use hired licensed contractors to transport and dispose its medical waste.

Biomedical waste containers (12" x 12" x 24", plastic lined cardboard), item number SPWH-66401506 are recommended for the disposal of medical waste. These containers provide protection for the personnel handling the waste and clearly identify the waste as medical and a biohazard. Material, which must be autoclaved, should be collected in special autoclave bags. Polypropylene bags, item number SPWH81051031 (30" x 36") are recommended. These bags are stocked in the warehouse. After autoclaving, the waste must be placed in the gray carts marked for medical waste only. These carts are picked up by the U. S. Army Garrison personnel and the waste is incinerated. Do not place medical waste in any dumpster or on the ground. Medical waste should only be handled by trained laboratory personnel. Custodial personnel are not permitted nor should they be asked to handle autoclavable waste unless it has been placed in a designated red can or red cart that will be autoclaved.

Wastes containing animals, animal tissue, and other anatomical or pathological material must be properly packaged in a leak proof container and placed in the special animal cart. Animal carts are emptied before 10 am daily, call (301) 619-2323 if further information is needed.

Needles and syringes shall be kept in the custody of a responsible person at all times until ultimate disposal. After use, needles and syringes should be placed in a designated sharps container. Two sizes of sharps containers SPWH 66401505 (5 gal.) and SPWH 66401504 (9.5 qt.) are stocked in the warehouse and are necessary for the collection of needles and syringes. These containers must be kept in the laboratory at all times until they are ready for disposal. These containers must be sealed when three fourths full and placed in the medical

waste cart outside the building by someone from your lab (FME service workers do not handle needles and syringes).

Other sharps include scalpels, razor blades, glass pipettes and other items, which may penetrate human skin. These items must be placed in a rigid leak proof container, securely closed, and handled as medical waste. A rigid container such as the biomedical waste container is recommended for the disposal of sharps other than needles and syringes.

Nonmedical waste includes most materials from non laboratory work areas, including offices, lunchrooms and meeting rooms. If the waste is combustible, it should be placed in the burnable dumpsters or recycled, as appropriate. It must be realized that although the wastes in the burnable dumpsters are usually incinerated, there are times when burnable wastes are taken directly to the Fort Detrick landfill. Therefore, materials from the laboratories which may be perceived as medical waste should not be placed in any dumpster, including the ones designated as "Burnable".

Recycling items include scrap metal, aluminum cans, glass, etc. Receptacles are located through out the facility. Call the Fort Detrick Recycling Center for information on the recycling program at 93016192323. Do not put laboratory glassware in burnable or recycling dumpsters. Dispose of laboratory glassware as medical waste.

Waste generated off NCI Frederick should not be brought onto Fort Detrick for disposal. The only exception is material that can be recycled by the U. S. Army. Any items brought onto Fort Detrick for recycling must be placed in the appropriate recycling container.

Questions and comments about the management of solid wastes at the NCI Frederick should be directed to the Environment, Health and Safety Program (x1451) or see web site <http://home.ncifcrf.gov/ehs/ehs.asp?id=69> .